



Neighborhood Traffic Meeting Notes

For October 12, 2011, 6:30 to 8 PM

Attendance – Approximately 15 to 20 residents in attendance. However, only 11 signed in. City staff included Yvetteh Ortiz with the Public Works Department and Sgt. Shawn Maples with the Traffic Unit of the Police Department.

Purpose of Meeting –To discuss neighbors’ traffic concerns, as well as, the City Neighborhood Traffic Management Program (NTMP). The goal of the meeting was to arrive at a shared definition of the issues of concern, identify items for further investigation including expansion of the study area (if appropriate), and discuss potential solutions from the NTMP Toolbox.

El Cerrito’s Neighborhood Traffic Management Program (NTMP) – The NTMP was adopted by City Council in September 2010. It replaces the former Speed Hump Program. The Speed Hump Program had only one tool to address resident concerns regarding speeding, traffic volumes and livability on neighborhood streets. The NTMP includes a toolbox of potential solutions including enforcement, education and engineering measures. It also requires neighborhood participation and consensus on the measures.

Problem Definition – City staff and residents discussed the various issues of concern as described in petition, based on previous requests from the public, and other concerns were opened for discussion. City staff also received several written comment at and after the meeting. All of these are listed below.

- ❖ *2011 Neighborhood Petition*
 - Signed by 19 of 31 households (61%) meeting the NTMP requirement for evaluation
 - Petition described the following concerns:
 - Heavy traffic especially during work and school commute hours
 - Motorist can freely drive too fast for residential street
 - Downhill westbound pick-up speed
 - Dart across Richmond St



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Neighborhood Traffic Management
Lincoln Ave between Richmond St and Ashbury Ave

- Many BART riders and high school student park on Lincoln, obstructing visibility at intersection
- Unwelcoming & unsafe environment for children, seniors, pets, pedestrians, bicyclists and wheelchair users
- Previous Petition in May 2010 included many neighbors along Norvell

❖ *Previous Resident Concerns and City Responses*

- Limited visibility at intersections (2009)
- Speeding, Richmond to Everett and Albemarle to Norvell (2009 & 2010)
- Radar Trailer as Educational Tool deployed by City (2010)
- City installed Red Curb at intersections (October 2010)

❖ *Open Discussion on Additional Issues of Concern*

- Intersection of Richmond/Lincoln continues to be a problem. Motorists either don't see or ignore pedestrians trying to cross Richmond
- Vehicles on Lincoln go too fast given the narrow width of the street
- Turning into and crossing Lincoln is difficult due to limited visibility caused by parked cars
- Limited visibility due to the hill east of Albemarle
- It unsafe for pedestrians and children
- Parked vehicles hit on numerous occasions, and not always reported
- BART parkers crowd the street

❖ *Written Comments*

- Traffic volumes and speeds increasing over time
- Motorists do not stop for pedestrians
- Dangerous for parents walking kids to school
- Difficult to cross Lincoln at Albemarle
- Cars on side streets roll through stops
- Need a safer morning walk to school
- Traffic on Lincoln tends to go pretty fast, perhaps more toward Ashbury



Preliminary Evaluation by City staff

- ❖ *Local Street* – Lincoln Avenue is a local street providing access to El Cerrito High
- ❖ *Geometry* – 30 feet wide, Relatively short blocks of just over 200 ft, entire Corridor is about 1,400 ft
- ❖ *Parking* – 4-hour permit parking on north side of Lincoln between Richmond St and Everett St only.
- ❖ *Traffic Volumes*
 - June 2009 – 1,540 vehicles over 24 hours
 - October 2011 – 1,800 vehicles between 7 AM and 3 PM (rainy day)
 - ***Traffic surges due to school - 100 vehicles during a 15-minute period in the morning***
- ❖ *Speeds*
 - 85th-percentile speed
 - June 2009 – 28 mph
 - October 2011 – 26 mph (rainy day)
 - Speed Limit of 25 mph

[For comparison - same segment of Central Ave, which is also classified as a local street and 30-feet-wide, had higher traffic volumes and speeds back in 2005. It should be noted that one side of Central Avenue has no parking and is classified as a minor arterial west of Richmond Street, which are likely the primary reasons for higher traffic volumes and speeds.]

- ❖ *Reported Collision 2008-2010* – Three collisions in 2009 involving parked cars. No reported collisions in 2008, 2009 or 2011.
- ❖ **Lincoln Avenue meets NTMP Qualification Criteria for implementation of a combination of enforcement, education and engineering measures**
 - 85th-percentile speed in excess of the posted speed limit by 2 mph – Met
 - Daily traffic must exceed 1,000 vehicles per day – Met

NTMP Toolbox /Potential Solution Discussion

Several measures to address neighbors’ concerns were discussed by City staff, residents in attendance as well as in written comments. These measures will require additional evaluation. Some will also require additional support from Lincoln Avenue residents and possibly residents on surrounding neighborhood streets that may be impacted by the measures. In general, the NTMP approach is to implement straight-forward, low-cost engineering measures first and then move on to more restrictive, physical measures if the first set of measures are not adequate.

Educational Measures

1. Regular deployment of the Speed ”Radar Trailer” – To remind motorists of the speed limit and their own speed. Residents can call the Police Traffic Unit at any time to request deployment of the trailer. See web link for additional information: <http://www.el-cerrito.org/police/traffic.html>
2. Neighborhood Pace Car Pledge Program – To encourage residents to take responsibility for the impact of their own driving while setting the “pace” for safer streets and neighborhoods throughout El Cerrito. We had several residents pledge to be a “Pace Car” at the meeting. See attached pledge form if you are interested in pledging as well.

Enforcement Measures

3. Crosswalk Enforcement at Richmond/Lincoln. The Police Traffic Unit has conducted crosswalk safety campaigns at other locations. Will check on doing it for this location.

Engineering Measures

4. For Richmond/Lincoln – Evaluate the following: addition of warning signs such as in-street “yield to pedestrians” signs; addition of red curb at corners for added visibility; addition of street lighting for night-time safety; and addition of flashing crosswalk lights



5. Along Lincoln, evaluate special striping and markings that can be installed to improve pedestrian safety and calm traffic including

- i. Additional red curbs at intersections
- ii. Marking of intersection narrowing features (cross-hatching)
- iii. Marking of high-visibility crosswalks



6. Lincoln is designated a Bicycle Route in the City's Circulation Plan – Install sharrows to remind drivers to share the road. Although they may not many bicyclists using Lincoln now, this can set the stage for a complete street that serves vehicles, bicyclists and pedestrians.



7. Along Lincoln, evaluate the installation several speed humps to slow traffic and make it safer for crossing pedestrians and vehicles. This measure requires a greater level of support from the neighborhood as it is a more restrictive, physical measure. Funding will need to be identified in the future.
8. For Ashbury at Lincoln – Evaluate the feasibility of right-turn/left-turn prohibition signs from Ashbury onto Lincoln to reduce traffic volumes and conflicts. We need to consider where this traffic will be diverted and impacts to those streets plus inconvenience to residents who live along Lincoln or use Lincoln to access their homes. This measure also requires a greater level of support from the neighborhood as it is a more restrictive measure and will also require future funding be identified. Similar issues arise with a one-way street. On a related note, the City has a grant-funded project to improve pedestrian safety and calm traffic on Ashbury at Lincoln.
9. All-Way Stop Signs to reduce conflicts – Intersections along Lincoln do not meet State criteria, which is currently used by City, for the installation of all-



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way stops. The City Council would have to adopt by ordinance different criteria geared toward local residential streets. Public Works will be evaluating this in the future as it is a measure in the NTMP toolbox.

10. Traffic circles – Lincoln is too narrow to physically accommodate them.

Additional Measures Not Discussed that could be applicable

11. Changes to street trees and landscaping

12. Street lighting improvements

Next Steps

- ❖ Over the next few months, evaluate the low-cost engineering measures described in Measures 1 through 6 above, except for the in-pavement flashing lights. Provide updates and/or notifications to neighborhood as necessary.
- ❖ Meet with other neighborhoods and prioritize neighborhood requests based on NTMP criteria in early 2012
- ❖ Follow-up with each neighborhood based on priority and per the NTMP process.
- ❖ If necessary to implement speed bumps, in-pavement flashing lights, turn restrictions or other more restrictive measures, obtain additional neighborhood support and seek funding through grants or future City operating budgets.